AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-17. (Cancelled)

18. (new) An article management system, comprising:

a noncontact electronic tag storing tag data attached to an article managed in a management area;

a passage radio communication means that can communicate with the noncontact electronic tag installed in a passage section leading to the management area, wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to communicate with the noncontact electronic tag attached to the article passing through the passage section;

a tag check processing means for detecting whether the noncontact electronic tag is permitted to pass through the passage section or is inhibited from passage, where said check processing means further comprises:

a multiple tag access processing means for avoiding a collision between said noncontact electronic tag and a second noncontact electronic tag and for reading the tag data stored in said noncontact electronic tag for processing executed by the passage radio communication means,

where said multiple tag access processing is enabled when said tag check processing means detects a noncontact electronic tag whose passage is inhibited.

19. (New) The article management system of claim 18, wherein said multiple tag access processing means is enabled only for a noncontact electronic tag whose passage through the passage section is inhibited.

20. (New) The article management system of claim 18 further comprising a user radio electronic means associated with an article passing through the passage section and configured to communicate with the passage radio communication means, and wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to receive user data stored on the user radio electronic means as user identification processing data.

21. (New) The article management system of claim 19 further comprising a user radio electronic means associated with an article passing through the passage section and configured to communicate with the passage radio communication means, and wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to receive user data stored on the user radio electronic means as user identification processing data.

22. (New) The article management system of any of claims 18-21 wherein said noncontact electronic tag data includes inhibition detection-possible data, which includes an application family identifier ("AFI") and a unique ID ("UID"), for detecting inhibition of passage of said electronic tag through said passage section based on at least one of said AFI and UID.

23. (New) An article management system, comprising:

a noncontact electronic tag storing tag data attached to an article managed in a management area;

a radio communication means that can communicate with said noncontact electronic tag, and wherein the radio communication means communicates with the noncontact electronic tag attached to the article,

wherein said radio communication means includes a multiple tag access processing means, comprising:

a interrogation communication processing means configured to set a part of a unique ID stored in the noncontact electronic tag as a reference for determining a response timing for causing the noncontact electronic tag to transmit a response data, and transmitting specification data specifying the part of the ID;

a response data acquiring processing means configured to acquire the response data of the noncontact electronic tag which did not have collision during the response at the response timing;

a response stop processing means configured to transmit a signal for stopping a further response from a noncontact electronic tag for which response data was acquired; and

a repetitive processing means which is enabled when a plurality of noncontact electronic tags make a response at the same response timing and one of a response data received by said radio communication means collides with another of a response data, said repetitive processing means configured to change a specification position in the specification data and causing the interrogating communication processing means, the response data acquiring processing means and the response stop processing means to be re-executed.

24. (new) The article management system of claim 23 wherein a limitation condition is set for terminating repetition of the repetitive processing means.

25. (new) The article management system of claim 23 wherein a limitation condition is set for terminating repetition of the repetitive processing means regardless of whether or not a collision avoidance is accomplished.

26. (New) The article management system of claim 23 further comprising a user radio electronic means associated with an article passing through the passage section and configured to communicate with the passage radio communication means, and wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to receive user data stored on the user radio electronic means as user identification processing data.

27. (New) The article management system of claim 23 wherein said noncontact electronic tag data includes inhibition detection-possible data, which includes an application family identifier ("AFI") and a unique ID ("UID"), for detecting inhibition of passage of said electronic tag through said passage section based on at least one of said AFI and UID.

28. (New) A program for operating an article management processing system, said processing system when executing said program performing the steps of:

communicating using a passage radio communication system with a noncontact electronic tag storing tag data attached to an article managed in a management area, said passage radio communication system being installed in a passage section leading to the management area, wherein said passage radio communication means is configured to communicate with the noncontact electronic tag attached to the article passing through the passage section;

detecting using a check processing program whether the noncontact electronic tag is permitted to pass through the passage section, where said check processing program further comprises:

a multiple tag access processing program for avoiding a collision between said noncontact electronic tag and a second noncontact electronic tag and for

reading the tag data stored in said noncontact electronic tag for processing executed by the passage radio communication means,

where said multiple tag access processing is enabled when said tag check processing means detects a noncontact electronic tag whose passage is inhibited.

29. (New) The program of claim 28 wherein said multiple tag access processing program is enabled only for a noncontact electronic tag whose passage through the passage section is inhibited.

30. (New) The program of claim 28 further comprising a user radio electronic means associated with an article passing through the passage section and configured to communicate with the passage radio communication means, and wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to receive user data stored on the user radio electronic means as user identification processing data.

31. (New) The program of claim 28 wherein said noncontact electronic tag data includes inhibition detection-possible data, which includes an application family identifier ("AFI") and a unique ID ("UID"), for detecting inhibition of passage of said electronic tag through said passage section based on at least one of said AFI and UID.

32. (New) A program for operating an article management processing system, said processing system when executing said program performing the steps of:

communicating using a radio communication system with a noncontact electronic tag attached to an article managed in a management area, wherein said noncontact electronic tag includes tag data;

processing using a multiple tag access program of said radio communication system, said processing comprising:

processing using a interrogation communication processing system configured to set a part of a unique ID stored in the noncontact electronic tag as a reference for determining a response timing for causing the noncontact electronic tag to transmit a response data, and transmitting specification data specifying the part of the ID;

processing using a response data acquiring processing system configured to acquire the response data of the noncontact electronic tag which did not have collision during the response by the response timing;

processing using a response stop processing system configured to transmit a signal for stopping a further response from a noncontact electronic tag which receives a response data; and

processing using a repetitive processing system which is enabled when a plurality of noncontact electronic tags make a response at the same response timing and one of a response data received by said radio communication means collides with another of a response data, said repetitive processing system configured to change a specification position in the specification data and causing the interrogating communication processing means, the response data acquiring processing means and the response stop processing means to be re-executed.

33. (new) The program of claim 32 wherein a limitation condition is set for terminating repetition of the repetitive processing system

34. (new) The program of claim 32 wherein a limitation condition is set for terminating repetition of the repetitive processing system regardless of whether or not a collision avoidance is accomplished.

35. (New) The program of claim 32 further comprising a user radio electronic means associated with an article passing through the passage section and configured to communicate with the passage radio communication means, and wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to receive user data stored on the user radio electronic means as user identification processing data.

36. (New) The program of claim 32 wherein said noncontact electronic tag data includes inhibition detection-possible data, which includes an application family identifier ("AFI") and a unique ID ("UID"), for detecting inhibition of passage of said electronic tag through said passage section based on at least one of said AFI and UID.